

*40 Days
of Gratitude*

THE UNITED THANK OFFERING

LENT 2022

"In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich."

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Welcome to a forty-day journey of gratitude for Lent 2022.

Over the past few years, UTO has offered a Lenten Calendar in the spirit of the old coin folders—count your blessings each day and make a thank offering for them. The calendar was tied to past UTO grant sites and invited you to look around your home or community and count things in common with the grant site. The feedback we received was that people enjoyed the daily recommendations to notice and give thanks, but it was a bit cumbersome.

This year we've created a new, streamlined process. Each week we'll look at an area of your life and world and take time to notice all the ways that God shows up through the people or places you encounter. You'll have space to journal your thoughts or ideas on the topic. We want to invite you to experience gratitude as a way of connecting more deeply with God this Lent. On Easter, you'll be invited to go back and read all the things that you wrote along with some invitations on how to take this time of reflection and move into a time of action.

We know that the past few years have been challenging and that many are anxious to just return to normal. But Lent is always a call to reflect and to dwell in a moment of examination. Brené Brown talks about the need to do this kind of reflection—to dig into the dark places, so we can discover the infinite power of our light. This Lent, we want to really reflect on all the things around us that bring joy or support to our life. We want to notice things that we might not take time to notice when we are busy or trying to get by. We want to give thanks and let go of things that are no longer serving us well. We want to journey with you to Easter, with Jesus, so that we all might find new life, new opportunities, and new things to be grateful for.

Thank you for journeying with us this Lent,
The United Thank Offering Board and Staff

Week of Ash Wednesday March 2 - 5, 2022

Wednesday, March 2

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO NOTICE AND GIVE THANKS FOR THE WAYS THAT YOU NOTICE STRENGTH IN THE WAYS YOU ARE FRAGILE.

On Ash Wednesday, we are reminded that, "We are dust and to dust we shall return" as ashes are spread on our forehead. For example, when we are vulnerable it can feel fragile, but vulnerability is strength. Share some ways that you notice strength in moments that might feel vulnerable or fragile.

Thursday, March 3

TODAY, REFLECT UPON: WHAT GIFTS DO YOU OFFER AT WORK, SCHOOL, OR IN PLACES YOU VOLUNTEER IN THE COMMUNITY?

One of the ways that we can recognize that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" is to give thanks for the gifts that we offer those we encounter the most. We are going to look at those gifts for the remainder of the week.

**THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR THE WAYS WE ARE
FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE. (PSALM 149:13)**

Friday, March 4

**TODAY, REFLECT UPON: WHAT GIFTS DO YOU OFFER AT CHURCH OR IN
PLACES WHERE YOU WORSHIP?**

Saturday, March 5

**TODAY, REFLECT UPON: WHAT GIFTS DO YOU OFFER AT HOME, TO FAMILY
MEMBERS, OR TO FRIENDS?**

First Week of Lent March 6-12, 2022

Sunday, March 6

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR HOW IN REST WE ARE SAVED (ISAIAH 30:15) BY REFLECTING ON AND GIVING THANKS FOR THE WAYS THAT WE PRACTICE REST AND RELAXATION.

Monday, March 7

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER THE BOOKS YOU HAVE IN YOUR HOUSE.

How many books do you own? Which one is your favorite? Which one reminds you of a moment in time that you are thankful for? Which one do you have that makes you laugh just to see it?

Tuesday, March 8

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER THE CRAFTS OR PROJECTS YOU ENJOY DOING.

What things do you like to do? How many projects do you have in mind to do but haven't started yet? How many projects are you currently working on? Who taught you or inspired you?

First Week of Lent

March 6-12, 2022

Wednesday, March 9

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER THE WAYS YOU MOVE YOUR BODY FOR HEALTH AND STRENGTH.

What exercise do you enjoy? How do you feel after challenging yourself to move more or in different ways? We invite you to give thanks for your body and the ways that you care for it today.

Thursday, March 10

TODAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR PLAY AND GAMES.

What games do you like to play (cards, on your phone, board games, outdoor games)? What was your favorite game as a child? What ways do you play?

**"FOR THUS SAID THE LORD GOD, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL:
IN RETURNING AND REST YOU SHALL BE SAVED;
IN QUIETNESS AND IN TRUST SHALL BE YOUR STRENGTH.
BUT YOU REFUSED"**

Friday, March 11

TODAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE WAYS WE GET TO INTERACT WITH AND TEND TO NATURE.

Many people find working in the dirt to be restful, some love having houseplants, while others simply appreciate the chance to experience nature that others have tended. What parts of nature do you get to interact with? What parts of nature do you tend to with gratitude?

Saturday, March 12

TODAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR ALL THE ADVENTURES WE GET TO HAVE OUTDOORS.

Where are your favorite places to spend time exploring the outdoors or nature? What do you love about those places? How do you feel when you get to be outside?

Second Week of Lent

March 13-19, 2022

Sunday, March 13

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR THE HOME WE LIVE IN (PSALMS 127:1) BY REFLECTING ON THE BLESSINGS THAT ARE FOUND WITHIN OUR HOMES.

Monday, March 14

TODAY, WE BEGIN BY GIVING THANKS FOR WHAT IS OFTEN CALLED THE HEART OF THE HOME: OUR KITCHENS.

Even if you do not like to cook, your kitchen offers things to sustain you. What appliances are you thankful for in your kitchen? What things in your kitchen bring you joy? What is the silliest thing in your kitchen that simply brings you joy?

Tuesday, March 15

TODAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR OUR LIVING ROOM SPACES.

Living room spaces hold our comfortable chairs and give us places to relax and connect. What are you most thankful for in your living space? What things help you feel safe? What things help you to relax? If your home is not a safe space, we invite you to reflect on a space where you do feel safe.

Second Week of Lent

March 13-19, 2022

Wednesday, March 16

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER YOUR BATHROOM AND GIVE THANKS FOR IT.

Perhaps not a room a lot of folks like to talk about, but an important part of our daily lives. What do you appreciate about that space? Do you have things in it that bring you joy, from a lovely smelling soap to a favorite product that you use each day, or one that you only use for special occasions?

Thursday, March 17

TODAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE PLACE WHERE WE SLEEP.

We know that sleep is important for our health and well-being, and we know that many of us struggle with sleep. Thinking about your bedroom or where you rest, give thanks for those things that help you rest and restore. What things help you relax? What things help you rise in the morning?

"UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE, THOSE WHO BUILD IT LABOR IN VAIN. UNLESS THE LORD GUARDS THE CITY, THE GUARD KEEPS WATCH IN VAIN."

Friday, March 18

TODAY WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER AND GIVE THANKS FOR THE OUTDOOR AREAS THAT MAKE UP YOUR HOME

Maybe it is a patio, porch, yard, or a window that looks out onto the world—how does this outdoor living space bring you joy? What about this space elicits gratitude?

Saturday, March 19

WE END THE WEEK REFLECTING ON WHERE WE LIVE BY GIVING THANKS FOR OUR FAVORITE SPOT WITHIN THAT PLACE.

Maybe it is a chair, a room, or a wall filled with beautiful things you've collected. We invite you to go to that place and give thanks for it and all the ways it brings you comfort, peace, and joy.

Third Week of Lent

March 20-26, 2022

Sunday, March 20

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR THE GOODNESS IN OUR COMMUNITIES (PSALM 133:1) BY REFLECTING ON OUR COMMUNITIES AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR LIVES EASIER, BETTER, OR MORE FUNCTIONAL.

Monday, March 21

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN, WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF KEEPING YOU PHYSICALLY HEALTHY?

We invite you to reflect upon those within the medical profession: doctors, nurses, orderlies, dentists, home health care professionals, anyone who cares for your health and well-being.

Tuesday, March 22

TODAY WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER THE INDIVIDUALS WHO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES CLEAN AND FUNCTIONAL.

Consider the people who take care of your garbage, your recycling, keep the parks and streets clean, and whose work often goes unnoticed. Today we invite you to give thanks for people you might not know but whose work affects your life.

Third Week of Lent

March 20-26, 2022

Wednesday, March 23

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO GIVE THANKS FOR ALL THOSE WHO BRING THINGS TO YOUR DOOR.

For many of us, especially during the pandemic, the delivery professionals became a connection to the world around us. Give thanks for those who deliver food, mail, packages, and other items in your community, even if not to your door.

Thursday, March 24

CONSIDER THE PLACES IN YOUR COMMUNITY THAT FEED YOU, AND GIVE THANKS FOR ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO WORK THERE, FROM THOSE WHO PREPARE THE FOOD TO THOSE WHO CLEAN UP AFTERWARDS.

Within our communities, there are a variety of places that make food to fuel our bodies when we either don't want to or don't have time to.

**"HOW VERY GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS WHEN KINDRED
LIVE TOGETHER IN UNITY!"**

Friday, March 25

CONSIDER AND GIVE THANKS FOR THOSE WHO WORK IN STORES.

Take some time to think about all the shops that you frequent. From the grocery store to the small business in your town and all of the people it takes to make the business run. From the people who stock the shelves, to those who work the register or keep the store clean. Especially consider those who often go overlooked, but without whom it would be harder to get the things we need.

Saturday, March 26

**WHO DO YOU INTERACT WITH IN YOUR COMMUNITY WHO HELPS YOU GET
FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER?**

We end the week by reflecting on those in our communities who support us in getting around town. We give thanks for those who work in transportation, the mechanics, gas station attendants, and bicycle repair people.

Fourth Week of Lent March 27 – April 2, 2022

Sunday, March 27

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR EVERYTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN (ECCLESIASTES1:9) BY REFLECTING ON TECHNOLOGY. EACH DAY, WE WANT TO REFLECT ON THE TECHNOLOGY WE USE, AND NOT ONLY GIVE THANKS FOR THE THINGS THAT HELP US, BUT ALSO THE THINGS THAT ARE NO LONGER SERVING US WELL THAT WE MIGHT NEED TO LET GO OF WITH GRATITUDE.

Monday, March 28

TODAY, CONSIDER YOUR PHONE.

In what ways are you grateful for your phone, the apps on it, the photos, and what things around the use of your phone might you be willing to let go of with gratitude?

Tuesday, March 29

CONSIDER YOUR COMPUTER, EITHER THE ONE YOU USE FOR WORK, SCHOOL, OR HOME.

What ways does the computer bring you joy and connection? What boundaries do you have with your computer that you're grateful for? What ways do you use your computer that you might want to change?

Fourth Week of Lent

March 27 – April 2, 2022

Wednesday, March 30

WHAT TOOLS CAN YOU GIVE THANKS FOR THAT HELP KEEP YOU HEALTHY AND STRONG?

Many of us have equipment in our homes that helps us live and move. Today we want you to consider all of the equipment (either smart or not) that helps you. Do you have medical equipment or exercise equipment that you're grateful for?

Thursday, March 31

TODAY, WE WANT YOU TO CONSIDER ALL THE FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION THAT YOU USE AND GIVE THANKS FOR THEM AND THOSE WHO MAKE THEM WORK.

While modes of transportation feel like a normal part of our daily lives, many of these forms of technology are relatively new. From engineers to pilots, today we give thanks for those who keep airplanes, trains, cars, buses, subways, light rail, and boats moving humans around the globe.

"WHAT HAS BEEN IS WHAT WILL BE, AND WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IS WHAT WILL BE DONE; THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN."

Friday, April 1

GIVE THANKS FOR ALL THE WAYS TECHNOLOGY HELPS YOU LAUGH, UNWIND, OR SIMPLY BE ENTERTAINED.

On this April Fool's Day, we want you to consider all the ways you interact with technology for entertainment. Think of the tools, like your television, or places, like digital displays at a museum, to apps that stream videos.

Saturday, April 2

REFLECT TODAY ON THE PARTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR, AND ALSO GIVE THANKS FOR WAYS YOU ARE USING IT THAT MIGHT NOT BE SERVING YOU WELL ANYMORE.

Finally, this week we want to give thanks for social media. While there are real problems with social media, it also keeps many of us connected to those we know and love, near or far. Make a new boundary with social media that will allow you to use it in new or better ways.

Fifth Week of Lent

April 3-9, 2022

Sunday, April 3

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR THE WAYS WE DO NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE (MATTHEW 4:4). WHEN JESUS SUGGESTED THAT MAN CANNOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, HE WAS REALLY TALKING ABOUT SCRIPTURE, BUT IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT WE NEED MORE THAN CARBOHYDRATES TO KEEP US HEALTHY. THIS WEEK, WE ARE GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AT OUR FAVORITE FOODS AND GIVE THANKS FOR THEM.

Monday, April 4

TODAY, WE BEGIN BY TAKING STOCK OF OUR FAVORITE FRUITS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WE CAN ONLY GET AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE YEAR.

What fruits do you enjoy and look forward to with gratitude?

Tuesday, April 5

SPEND A MOMENT AND GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR FAVORITE VEGETABLES, AND MAYBE EVEN NOTE THE ONES THAT YOU TOLERATE BECAUSE YOU KNOW THEY ARE GOOD FOR YOU.

Vegetables are a contentious issue for children, and many of us have very strong preferences about what vegetables we like, those we will tolerate, and the ones we'd rather not engage with. Which vegetables are you grateful for?

Fifth Week of Lent

April 3-9, 2022

Wednesday, April 6

TODAY, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO THINK ABOUT ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE US WITH FRESH FOOD, FROM THE FARM WORKER TO THE TRANSPORTATION PEOPLE TO THE GROCERY STORE WORKERS.

After spending two days thinking about foods that we enjoy eating fresh from the farm, it is time to stop and notice the work of our agricultural communities. Today we give thanks for farms, farm workers, and all those who grow our food. While you might not know a farmer, you likely know how hard they work.

Thursday, April 7

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SWEET TREATS YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR? WHO ARE THE PEOPLE CONNECTED TO THOSE ITEMS?

Today, we reflect on and celebrate our favorite sweet treats. We invite you to give thanks for your favorite sweets, from the item you'll grab at a coffee shop to a special dessert made for a celebration.

"BUT HE ANSWERED, "IT IS WRITTEN, 'ONE DOES NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

Friday, April 8

TODAY, WE WANT YOU TO REFLECT ON ALL OF THE RECIPES THAT CONNECT YOU.

For many of us, reflecting with gratitude on what we eat isn't complete without giving thanks for our beloved recipes. . From recipes handed down from your ancestors, to recipes that delight your loved ones now, what are those special dishes that connect you to your community and great cloud of witnesses that bring you joy simply remembering them? For those we give thanks.

Saturday, April 9

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO REFLECT ON ALL THE FOOD ADVENTURES YOU'VE HAD, BOTH GOOD AND NOT SO GOOD.

Trying new foods can be fun, terrifying, and a great story later. What things did you try that surprised you and became a favorite? What things did you try while traveling that you've never encountered again?

Holy Week

April 10-16, 2022

Sunday, April 10

SELF-CARE SUNDAY: SHARE ONE KIND THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF TODAY IN THANKSGIVING FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

Use this space to reflect on your self-care or on your thoughts throughout the week. You can write, doodle, or whatever your heart desires.

THIS WEEK, WE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR THE PEARLS OF GREAT PRICE IN OUR LIVES. (MATTHEW 13:45). AS WE PREPARE FOR EASTER, WE WANT TO FINISH OUR GRATITUDE JOURNEY BY REFLECTING UPON THOSE THINGS THAT MATTER THE MOST TO US.

Monday, April 11

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO GIVE THANKS FOR YOURSELF, YOUR HEALTH, YOUR ABILITY, YOUR MIND, AND FOR WHO YOU ARE.

It is easy to give thanks for others but often more challenging to sit and say thank you to ourselves.

Tuesday, April 12

TODAY, WE INVITE YOU TO GIVE THANKS FOR THE HEIRLOOMS IN YOUR LIFE, THE REMINDERS AND SIGNS OF YOUR CONNECTION TO THINGS PAST, THINGS LOVED, OR THINGS LOST.

Many of us have special items that we either carry with us or have around the house that remind us of people we love, places we've visited, or events in our lives.

Holy Week

April 10-16, 2022

Wednesday, April 13

CONSIDER THE SMALL THINGS IN LIFE THAT BRING YOU JOY AND GIVE THANKS FOR THEM.

Do you have a favorite coffee mug, favorite chair, favorite plant, or tree? Is it the first crocus of Spring that you see? Is it the smell of freshly baked bread? What small things bring you joy that you can give thanks for?

Thursday, April 14

TODAY WE WANT TO INVITE YOU TO WRITE DOWN AND GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR SQUARE SQUAD.

Brené Brown suggests that each of us have a “square squad” or a very small (think small square post-it) list of the people whose opinions matter the most. She says that this list contains the people who have earned the right to hear our stories and who want to support us in living courageous, vulnerable lives. We see this demonstrated through the disciples who stand with Jesus on Maundy Thursday, imperfectly but perfectly human. Who will show up for you when you need it most?

"AGAIN, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MERCHANT IN SEARCH OF FINE PEARLS"

Friday, April 15

TODAY, CONSIDER THE PHOTOGRAPHS AND ICONS IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE AS CONNECTIONS TO OTHER TIMES AND OTHER PLACES.

Today is Good Friday, and for some Episcopalians it is a day to pray the Stations of the Cross or to reflect on the events of Good Friday and pray before a cross. Icons are windows into another time, a way of connecting us to things from the past. Photographs do a similar thing. Photographs connect us with people or moments that have passed and many of us have treasured photographs around our homes that we are grateful to have.

Saturday, April 16

ON THIS HOLY SATURDAY, WE INVITE YOU TO GIVE THANKS FOR THE TRADITIONS IN YOUR LIFE THAT BRING JOY, MEANING, AND CONNECTION.

What are the ways that you mark the passage of time and how do these celebrations connect you with others, with God or more deeply within yourself?

Happy Easter, Christ is Risen!

Thank you for taking the journey with us these last forty days. You might be asking yourself: now what? Here are some ways to continue the work you've started during Lent.

1. Give thanks. We spent the last forty days noticing all the good things that happen each day and giving thanks to God for them. Today, we encourage you to make an offering for those blessings. Go back through your journal and count all of the things you listed. Challenge yourself to give a penny, a nickel, a dime, or some amount of money for each thing listed. You can then make a thank offering online at www.unitedthankoffering.org/give or by texting INGATHER to 41444. 100% of your donation will go on to bless others as a grant for innovative mission and ministry projects.

2. Share gratitude. Go back through your booklet and highlight or mark all the people you mentioned by name. Make a list of them and write a thank you note to each person for the ways they have blessed you. If there are a lot of names, you could do one a week until Christmas.

3. Take action. Noticing all the good things in your life might have interacted with other people's lives in ways that might call you to do more. For those items that might touch upon justice issues, visit the Office of Government Relations for The Episcopal Church to join in their advocacy work: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/>

Since we reflected so much on our homes and safe places, consider learning more about Episcopal Migration Ministries: <https://episcopalmigrationministries.org> that works to ensure that refugees find their way as they build new homes and lives among us.

4. Bless others. There are many things in this booklet that others might treasure. Remember all the recipes and traditions you wrote down? Consider making a recipe book with the stories that go along with them as a gift for your family. Did you have a lot of important photos that you listed? Consider getting them digitized so they can be shared.

5. Carry on. What did you notice during Lent that you would like to continue? Did you find a self-care practice that really worked for you? Did you remember or rekindle a tradition or practice that you had let go during the pandemic? What things would you like to continue beyond Lent, or simply commit to do over the Easter Season?

Regardless of what you do next, take a moment to celebrate that you practiced gratitude for the entire season of Lent. We are giving thanks for your presence on the journey with us, and we welcome you to continue to join us as we dive more deeply into our own practices of gratitude as members of the United Thank Offering.

With profound gratitude,
The UTO Board and Staff

About the United Thank Offering

In the late 1800s the women of The Episcopal Church learned that the need for new ministries was great but that there was no funding for innovative ideas. The women prayed and then took up a thank offering. The money collected was then given away to support these important projects. Our mission remains the same today. We encourage every Episcopalian to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for your blessings, and make an offering for those blessings. Your blessing goes on to bless others, as 100% of all donations received by UTO are granted the following year to support innovative mission and ministry. To learn more about UTO visit: www.unitedthankoffering.org or contact The Rev. Canon Heather Melton at hmelton@episcopalchurch.org.